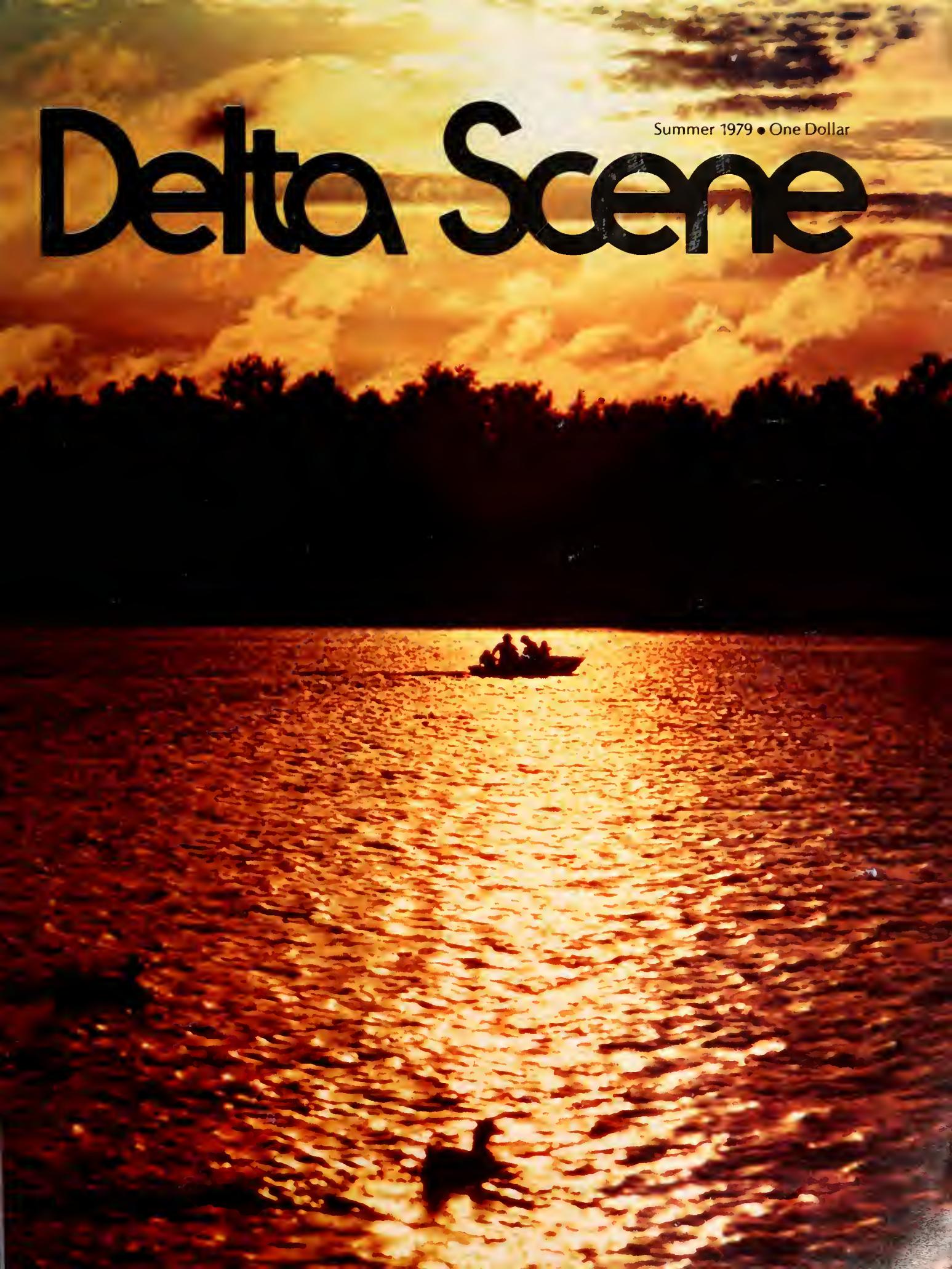


Delta Scene

Summer 1979 • One Dollar



festival '79

"On the Levee" in Greenville
June 29 - July 4



← **FREDDY FENDER**

FREE CONCERT
 July 4, 8:30 p.m.



ACE CANNON →

FREE CONCERT
 Monday July 2, 8:30 p.m.



← **FAT BACK**

Free Concert
 Tuesday July 3rd 8:30 p.m.



"BEATLE FEVER"
TRIBUTE TO
THE BEATLES



FEATURING:

- The Hollywood Argyles
- Tribute to Elvis Presley
- Tribute to Buddy Holly
- Laser Light Show
- Thousands of Slides
- Films & Special Effects

FREE CONCERT
 Saturday June 30, 8:30 p.m.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **ALSO FEATURING:** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

With Action Starting Nightly At 7:00

- Free Nightly Concerts By "Atlantis"
- Free Concert by "Country Gator"
- June 29th 8:30 p.m.
- 200 Silver Dollars Given Away Nitely
- Carnival All Week

- Delta Stridders "Mainstream Marathon"
- Thousands of Dollars of Fireworks July 4th
- Delta Folk Gospel Festival
- July 1st 1 p.m. - 7 p.m.
- ...And Much, Much More

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FORUM:

A Message from the Editor

Curt Lamar

While returning from a recent trip to Dallas, my wife and I began to comment on the various scenic assets and liabilities of states we have visited. A discussion then followed concerning the stark, overpowering beauty of Colorado; the hypnotic attractiveness of western Kansas and its wheatfields; the vastness of eastern New Mexico; the stark drabness of western Texas; and so on. While my wife noted that North Carolina was the most beautiful state she has seen, and Florida the most disappointing, I commented that Mississippi was as pretty as any state I've been in.

At first this statement seems terribly prejudiced in view of the fact that I am native-born and reared. However, I honestly believe this is reality. From the coast to the hilly northeast, from the lush southwest to the Delta, Mississippi is an unspoiled, scenic wonderland. And as the vacation season approaches, especially in light of the impending gasoline shortage, Mississippians should seriously consider discovering the scenic and historic attractions of their state.

The Delta in particular offers a wide variety of vacation opportunities, both long and short term. Although Memphis is not in the state, it is the northern terminus of the Delta and offers an exciting potpourri of activities — Liberty Land, the Pink Palace, the Indian Village, the Zoological Park, and the like. At the southern part of the Delta is historic Vicksburg, one of the most visited areas of the state by non-Mississippians but, oddly enough, not so well-known to native Deltans.

In between Memphis and Vicksburg is a veritable cornucopia of travel opportunities. Near Rolling Fork are the ruins of Mt. Helena, once the dominant plantation home in the south Delta. Highway 1 from Onward north to Memphis has been designated as one of the only two "scenic routes" in the state by the leading road atlas publication, the other route being the Natchez Trace. North of Greenville on Highway 1 is the Winterville Indian Mound site, and above that is Scott, the headquarters of D & PL Plantation, one of the largest operating farms in the country. To the east of Greenville is the noted Stoneville Experimental Station.

Greenwood offers Florewood Living Plantation and Cottonlandia. Cleveland has Delta State University, unquestionably the most attractive college campus in the state. Rosedale is a town out of the past in appearance, hearkening to the days of the Old South. Parks of interest are those at Rosedale, the Great River Road Park, at Grenada Lake, and Leroy Percy at Hollandale, famous for its alligators.

Certainly this "off the top of my head" list could be expanded twofold, but the point has been made. When you make your summer vacation plans, heed the State A & I Board's call to "look in your own backyard." You won't be sorry you saw the Delta first.

Delta Scene is published quarterly by Delta Scene Corporation, in cooperation with Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38733. Second class postage paid at Cleveland, Mississippi.

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Address editorial, advertising and circulation correspondence to **Delta Scene**, P.O. Box B-3, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38733. Sufficient return postage and self-addressed envelope must accompany all manuscripts; although care will be exercised, publisher does not guarantee their return.

Single copies \$1 (Check with order). One-year subscription \$3.50, two-year subscription \$6, three-year subscription \$9. **Delta Scene** serves the entire delta region of Mississippi.

New Subscriptions will begin with the first issue after receipt of order. **Change of address** must be made six weeks in advance to insure uninterrupted service. Please send new address along with mailing label from issue.

Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to **Delta Scene**, P.O. Box B-3, Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi 38733.

USPS 320-650

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Delta Scene

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20 Sailing Comes to the Delta

Rosie Booth launches a narrative about a new Delta pastime.

COVER PHOTO:Photographer Bob Lord captures the end of a peaceful afternoon for these two fishermen on Lake Ferguson

EXHIBITS

June 11 - July 30

WORLD WAR I POSTER EXHIBIT, The University of Mississippi Museums, 10 a.m. - 4 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. on Sunday.

June 29

Opening of "Stella Since 1970." Mississippi Museum of Art. Jackson, MS.

July 1-21

"William Faulkner: The Cofield Collection", from the Mississippi Historical Museum. Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

July

ART EXHIBIT BY GLENNRAY TUTOR, The University of Mississippi Library Lobby.

July 29 - August 3

WILLIAM FAULKNER IN FILM, The University of Mississippi Library Lobby.

July 29 - August 3

FAULKNER COUNTRY POTTERY by Rodger Wood, The University of Mississippi Library Browsing Room.

August 1 - 21

FAULKNER-THE COFIELD COLLECTION," University of Mississippi Museums, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday.

August 1 - 21

IMPRESSIONS OF FAULKNER COUNTRY, Watercolors by Bill Baggett, The University of Mississippi Museums, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday.

August

ART EXHIBIT by Evelyn Crocker, The University of Mississippi Library Lobby.

August

Photographs by Matt Ralston. Carnegie Public Library. Clarksdale, MS.

September

Paintings by Jane Allen. Carnegie Public Library. Clarksdale, MS.

October

Paintings by Charles Davis. Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

SPORTS

June 1 - July 6

National Youth Sports Program (NYSP), A Community Program that will involve 400 youngsters between the ages 10-18. Sponsored by The National Collegiate Athletic Association, Mississippi Valley State University

July 18 - 22

MISSISSIPPI ADULT TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS, The University of Mississippi Campus.

THEATRE

July 12 - 14

SUMMER SHOWCASE '79, "The Robber Bridegroom," Fulton Chapel, The University of Mississippi, 8 p.m.

August 2 - 4

SUMMER SHOWCASE '79, "The Sound of Music," Fulton Chapel, The University of Mississippi, 8 p.m.

FESTIVALS & FLEA MARKETS

June 30-July 7

Grenada Lake Festival. Co-ordinated by Grenada Chamber of Commerce, Grenada, MS.

July 2-July 7

Mainstream Festival '79. Featuring well-known entertainers performing each night. Events start each night around 6:30 p.m. Free to public. On the waterfront, Greenville, MS.

July 3

Delta Jubilee Fourth of July Celebration. 5:00 p.m. Clarksdale. Sponsored by Cohoma County Chamber of Commerce.

September 8

Folk Life Festival at Hugh White State Park, MS. Sponsored by State Park Commission.

September 11

Catholic Fair. 5:00 p.m. Clarksdale.

September 27-October 1

Expo 1850. Crafts, entertainment, food, exhibits, Expo River Run II, fishing rodeo. Admission, Adults - \$2.00, Students 6-16 - \$1.00, Under 6 free. Florewood River Plantation, Greenwood, MS.

October 6

Gateway to the Delta Arts and Crafts Festival. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Triangle Grounds at Yazoo City, MS.

October 13

Second Annual Fall Deer Creek Arts and Crafts Festival, Leland, MS.

EVENTS

CONFERENCES

July 7 - 12

CHEERLEADER INSTITUTE I. The University of Mississippi Campus. (For high school cheerleaders from throughout the country — instruction and competition. The institute is staffed by the Universal Cheerleaders Association).

July 10 - 20

WORKSHOP IN INSTRUCTIONAL TELEVISION. E.F. Yerby Center. The University of Mississippi.

July 14 - 19

CHEERLEADER INSTITUTE II. The University of Mississippi Campus. (A second six-day camp will be conducted for another group of cheerleaders).

July 29 - August 3

FAULKNER AND YOKNAPATAWPHA CONFERENCE. The University of Mississippi Campus. (Sponsored by the Department of English. Speakers for the 1979 conference will include Joseph Blotner, Thomas McHaney, Michael Millgate, James Watson and Noel Polk).

August 12 - 15

COSMETOLOGY CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINAR. The University of Mississippi Campus.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

June 11

Opening of "Dance Image: A Tribute to Serge Daighilev". Mississippi Gallery Spring Opening - Student Works from the Jackson Public Schools, "Homage to Michelangelo", Selections from the Permanent Collection. MMA Birthday Party. Mississippi Museum of Art. Jackson, MS.

July 9 - August 10

SECOND SUMMER SCHOOL SESSION. The session is operated for the benefit of regular students, transfers, freshmen, in-service teachers and those who wish to secure a masters degree in elementary education. Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS

June 3 - July 13

UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM (Tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades). This program is designed to motivate and improve academic skills. Inquiries concerning the program should be directed to Special Programs, Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS

August 21 - 22

REGISTRATION FOR THE FALL SEMESTER, Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS

December 8-9

Old Fashioned Christmas. Florewood River Plantation.

LECTURES/WORKSHOP

June 4 - 15 Geriatric Fitness;

June 9 - 20 Concepts and Issues

In The Field of Aging;

SUMMER INSTITUTE IN GERONTOLOGY, Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS

June 6 - 20

A Summer Workshop in Career Education for Minorities, Exceptional Persons and Women. The workshop is for all persons interested in Career Education, teachers, and agencies providing education and guidance to students. Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, MS

July 5

Lunch with Books. Carnegie Public Library. Clarksdale, MS.

September 6

Lunch with Books. Carnegie Public Library. Clarksdale, MS.

October 4

Lunch with Books. Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

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The Return of the Painter by James Gray

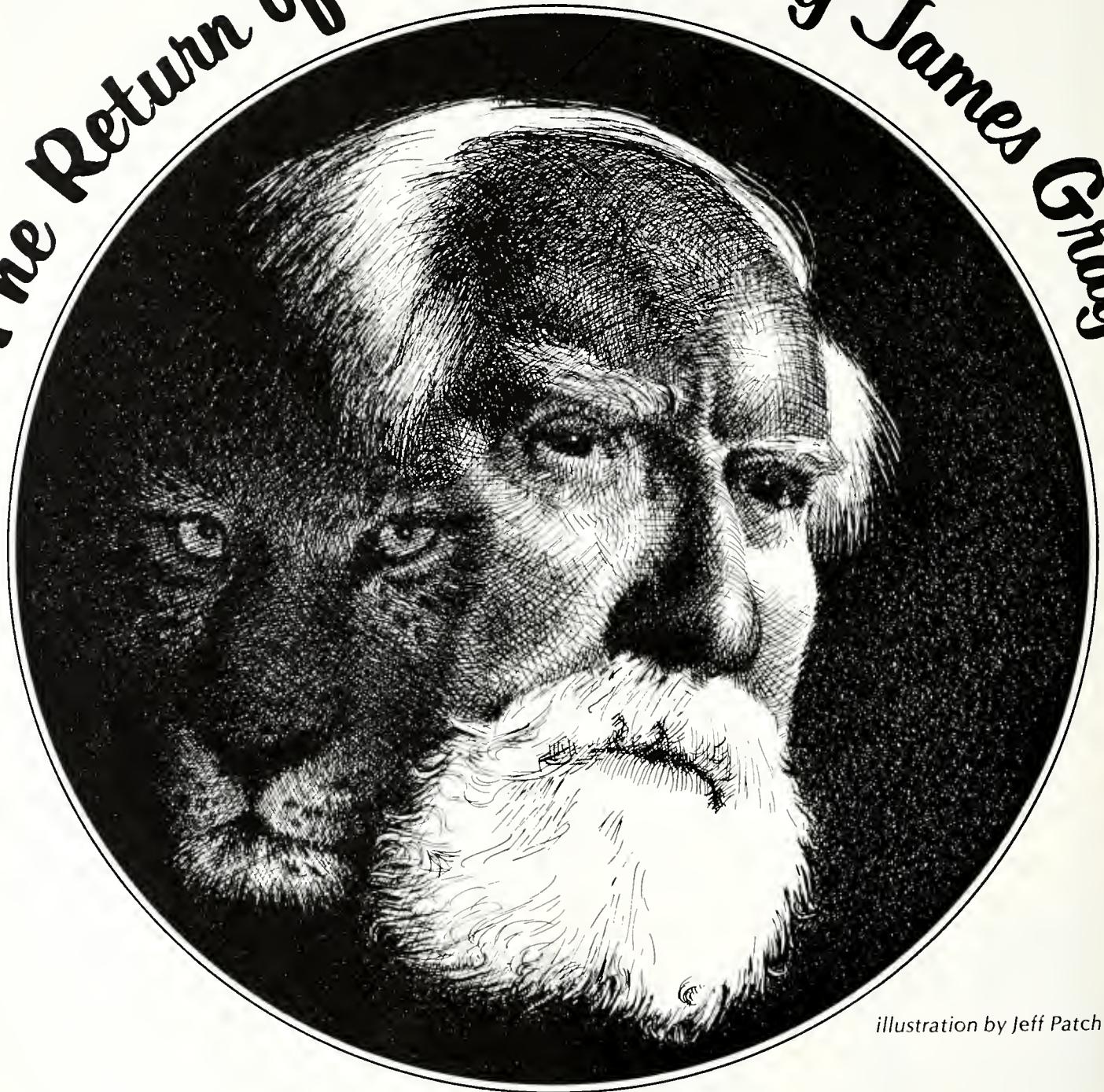


illustration by Jeff Patch

In the bed the old man seemed very small. A patchwork quilt covered him to his chin, lying smooth and almost flat over his body. Beside the bed, in a straight backed chair, sat the boy, watching the old man's face.

The old man's face had a pinched, drawn look about the eyes, as though the pain were a headache. The eyes were closed, but the boy sensed that his grandfather was not asleep. In a moment, as they did every morning,

the eyes would open.

But this time, without opening his eyes, the old man asked softly, "That you, Jake?"

"Yes, Grandaddy."

Then the eyes opened slowly and looked at the boy.

"How do you feel this morning?" the boy asked.

"Middlin'. I slept some. But I wish your ma'd bring me one of the red pills in a little while."

"I'll tell her," the boy said. "Do you want breakfast?"

The old man shook his head. "Just the medicine," he said. Then, as the boy Jake started for the door, the old man lifted his head and raised a hand weakly and the boy paused. "Wait a minute. Tell me again where you went yesterday."

"I followed the creek as far as the river. Then I cut across the Taggart place and along the road and back here."

The old man lay quietly.

"I didn't see nothing," the boy added.

"Well, you just keep your eyes sharp. They're around somewhere. I got a feeling. There's one, maybe two."

The boy nodded. "Yes, sir."

"You still got the picture of the track?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you study it careful. Look for that track in the sand around the creek. And check trees for scratch marks. Did you see much deer sign?"

"Yes, sir. Plenty."

The old man nodded in satisfaction. "Just keep looking, little Jake."

"Okay," Jake said. "I'll see you tonight."

He left the room quietly, leaving the door open, and went into the kitchen. His father and mother were at breakfast. His mother gave him a plate of scrambled eggs with biscuits and plum jelly.

"He don't want breakfast," the boy told his mother. "He says he'd like his red medicine after a while."

"He ought to eat something," his father said. "To keep his strength up."

"I'll try him with some juice a little later," his mother said. "You eat quick, Jake. School."

"Yes, ma'am," the boy said. He felt his father's eyes on him and he looked up.

"You still looking for cat sign?" asked his father.

Jake nodded, chewing a mouthful of buttered biscuit and plum jelly.

"It's a waste of time," his father said. "If he wasn't so sick—"

His mother made a quick, shushing sound, and his father shrugged and sipped his coffee.

"Billy Hutchins saw one," Jake said.

"Billy Hutchins is old and senile," said his father. "Maybe he saw something cross the road. Maybe not. He don't know what he saw."

"Grandaddy thinks they've come back because of all the deer," Jake said.

"We've got plenty of deer, all right," his mother said. "They almost ruined the garden."

His father looked at her over his cup. "Deer or no deer, there hasn't been a big cat around here in forty years. They all moved out long ago. You go to the Rocky Mountains and you might find one. Or to the Everglades. Not here in the Delta." He shook his head and finished his coffee.

"They could come back as easy as they left," Jake countered politely. He did not want to sound argumentative.

His father smiled and said, "You sound like your grandfather. I ain't stopping you. Go ahead and look all you want. Just be careful."

"Sam always goes along," Jake said.

"Lots of help that dog'll be if you fall in the river," his father said.

"Jake" his mother said firmly. "The school bus."

Jake hurried through breakfast. Carrying his books, he passed his grandfather's bedroom. Through the partly open door he could see the frail figure in the bed. The eyes were closed again, and just then, for the first time, it occurred to Jake that his grandfather was dying.

The thought weighed on him all through the bus ride and did not leave until he started concentrating on his morning classwork. Then, in the afternoon, walking back up the long, gravel drive toward the house, he thought again of his grandfather. He remembered how his grandfather loved to see things and how keen his eyes were. When his illness had forced him to bed, he had sent Jake out to be his eyes. He wanted to know if there were ducks yet on the river, or if deer had come to the block salt they had buried that spring among the willows at the shallow end of the pond. How many tracks and how big. These were

things he wanted to find out for himself, but he couldn't. So he sent Jake.

The business of searching for signs of a big cat had begun two weeks ago when Billy Hutchins had come to visit his grandfather. They were old friends, and Billy had told of an apparition that, one evening at dusk, had shot smoothly and silently across the road before him.

"It had a tail as long as its body," Billy said. "I didn't get more'n a glimpse, but I could tell that much. T'warn't no bobcat."

"Painter," Jake's grandfather had said from the bed, his eyes bright.

"You think so, Dutch?" asked Billy. "Wouldn't that be something?"

"Stands to reason," said his grandfather. "They'd follow the deer. And we've got plenty of deer, ain't we, Jake?"

Jake had been sitting in the corner in a rocker, listening.

"Tell Billy about all the deer tracks around that salt."

"There's lots of 'em," Jake said.

"It's the cycle," his grandfather said. "Deer population's up. Rabbits, too. If nature's still working, there's got to be big cats."

Now, walking toward the house, Jake remembered his grandfather's charge to him to look for the cat. The old man had given him a pencil drawing of the track. Jake carried it in his shirt pocket, and the paper was wearing at the creases. In the two weeks that followed, he had wandered over all of the surrounding country that he could safely travel and had seen no sign. As time went on, finding the signs seemed to have become, for his grandfather, more and more urgent. Now the problem for Jake was determining where to look. He was running out of places.

Inside the house, walking quietly, he passed his grandfather's bedroom door. The old man seemed to be asleep. Jake left his books in his room, went into the kitchen and took an apple from a basket in the cupboard. His mother was there.

"How's Grandaddy?" he asked her.

His mother did not look well. Her face looked tired and serious and there were dark circles around her eyes. "He didn't have a good day," she said. "I'm afraid for him, Jake."

Jake took a bite of the apple. He felt he should say something.

"I wish there was something we could do," he said.

"There's nothing to do. We're doing everything we can."

Jake said nothing more. He went quietly out the kitchen door into the backyard. As he stepped out, Sam emerged from beneath the house and ran to him, his body wriggling in delight. Jake scratched his ears.

"Hello, mutt," he said. "You old, mud-colored mutt."

The dog licked his hand. Jake stood up straight and looked out over the farm as he munched the apple. Far away in the south field his father was running the hay baler. Two of Jake's cousins were loading the bales onto a wagon. Jake could hear the clank of the baler. Near the barn a few Angus stood square and black around the water trough, and beyond the barn were scattered pines and thickets of blackberry and honeysuckle. Farther on he could see the hickory and oak woods where he hunted squirrels. Winding through the woods was the barbed wire fence that marked his father's property and, beyond that, the deep timber of the Delta National forest.

Jake looked for a long moment at the distant trees, thinking. Then he said, "Come on, Sam," and started walking toward the woods.

In the woods it was quiet and the trees still wore the green of late September. Jake moved through them with Sam at his heels. As they neared the fence, a rabbit burst from a thicket and ran in silent panic up the sloping ground. Sam froze, looking at Jake.

"Stay," Jake commanded. He watched the rabbit dive into a pile of pine brush.

"Okay," he said. "Come on."

At the fence Jake stopped and looked for a place to cross. He found a spot that offered clearance between the bottom strand and the ground and he slithered through. He stood up and brushed himself off.

On this side of the fence he felt like a trespasser. He did not have the comfortable feeling of being on his own property, or even the property of a neighbor. He looked up at the sun. It was still high, but inching downward. Jake started off through the forest.

He walked as quietly as he could, heel down first, Indian style, pushing through the undergrowth. Ahead, through the trees, he could see what seemed to be a small clearing.

In a few minutes he was standing at the edge of an old logging road. Any wheel ruts had been worn away long ago, and the old road was smoothly covered with leaves. It cut straight into the forest until it turned out of sight. Jake began to follow it. It was like walking along a parkway.

He walked for what seemed a long time, glancing occasionally at the sun. It was a pleasant, easy walk, and finally he realized it was pointless. He was only taking a stroll. He had not checked a single tree for scratch marks. He watched Sam moving ahead of him, nose down, casting back and forth across the road. Even Sam could have smelled a cat. It was no use. Jake stopped in the road.

"Here, Sam," he said. "Let's go home."

The dog heeled, and they started back. The sun had dipped behind the high branches of the distant trees and the light on the road was fading quickly. What had once been a brightly lit parkway through the trees took on the appearance of a darkening tunnel. Suddenly Sam seemed reluctant to move ahead. His nose brushed the leg of Jake's denims.

Later, when he thought about it, Jake could not remember actually seeing anything. He had merely sensed a quick, noiseless rush, movement without form, thirty yards ahead. He stopped, frozen, his eyes wide and his skin tingling. Something had leaped across the old log road in one bound without disturbing a leaf. It had been there. Now it was gone. Gone in absolute silence. Now the only sound was the dog.

Jake looked at Sam. All the hair along the ridge of his spine bristled, and the growl in his throat was unlike anything Jake had ever heard. Sam stood trembling, head lowered, snout pointing down the road. Watching the dog, Jake felt the prickling of his own hair, like tiny, electric shocks. The muscles in his legs fluttered. He moved a halting step forward, Sam inching behind him, then stopped. His

hands shook.

"It's gone now," he whispered. "Whatever it was."

The dog's low growl continued, and Jake suddenly felt cold. He rubbed his arms.

"We've got to go past that place to get home, Sam," he said. "Now come on."

He began walking, slowly at first, then rapidly. He passed the place in the road where the thing had leaped. He did not look off into the trees. A minute after they were past, the dog's growling ceased. The sun was a red ball balanced on the horizon when they reached the fence.

Past the fence, once again on his own property, Jake felt safe. He reached down and patted Sam's head and scratched his ears. The dog stood still and wagged its tail.

"We saw one," Jake said happily. "We got to go tell him."

His mother was in the kitchen when he came through the back door. She was sitting alone at the table with the last of the sun coming through the window. The house was quiet. She lifted her head as Jake came in.

"Is Grandaddy awake?" he asked her.

"I think so," she said. She kept her eyes averted, and Jake knew that she had been crying.

"I've got something to tell him."

His mother nodded. Then, as he started for the door, she said "Jake?" and he paused.

"Don't stay too long," she said. "He feels bad. He wants to go back to the hospital."

Something lurched inside Jake. He felt a hollowness in the pit of his stomach. He remembered that his grandfather had once said that he would only go back to the hospital when the pain became too much and he could no longer fight.

"I'll only stay a minute," he said.

He went into the old man's bedroom. The shades were drawn and the lamp beside the bed cast a yellow light on the walls. The old man's eyes were open to the ceiling. He turned his head slowly on the pillow as Jake entered.

"Hey, Grandaddy," Jake said.

"Hello, little Jake." The voice sounded very tired.

continued on page 24

Bayous aren't for the timid.

by Susie James

Bayous aren't for the timid. I learned the hard way — firsthand experience.

The first bayou trip I made was at the tender age of nine.

The whole family took off work to go bayou fishing. It was to be an outing taking up the better part of a day. Work meant ordinary farm duties during the Spring — hoeing for the early garden, plowing, fertilizing, planting cotton and corn fields. A Saturday outing on Sharkey Bayou near Avalon, Mississippi, was looked forward to as an adventure. A friend had asked my father to take off for the day to make the trip.

Mama packed a picnic lunch. We loaded our green 1951 Ford pickup truck with the bucket of worms we'd dug, water, fishing poles, day quilts and ourselves. Daddy's friend brought the boat.

Daddy found the entrance from Highway Eight, and the further we progressed down a narrow, muddy, rutted road into the woods, the more of an adventure my brothers and I thought we were having. We didn't even mind getting out of the backend of the pickup to wrestle open the gap made of barbed wire and posts.

It was a hot, humid May morning. The sun bore down on our bare heads. My two brothers' straw hats lay neglected on the bed of the pickup, as did the bonnet Mama constantly failed in her attempts to make me wear to shield my blonde head from the hot Mississippi sun.

Daddy's friend, Vernon Brooks, had arrived at the agreed-upon site before us. "Help me get the boat out and on the bayou," he yelled to Daddy and the boys as we parked the pickup.

Franklin, the oldest boy at 12, and Daddy went over to Brooks' orange and white Chevy pickup. The dark waters in the bayou's edge near the clearing rippled and splashed with the advent of the green metal boat. "We better put the motor on, after we get in deeper water," Brooks said. "Who's coming with me?" It turned out Franklin, because he was oldest, got to go fishing in the boat, along with Daddy and Brooks.

Donald stayed in the clearing with Mama and me and the worms and the picnic food. Already Donald and I were hungry but we knew we had to wait at least an hour to ask for a sandwich. The box, covered with a white print cloth, contained pimiento cheese sandwiches, Kool-Aid, sliced bread and fresh tomatoes along with salt and a jar of mayonnaise. We watched as Mama tidied the covering cloth and hoped the ants wouldn't find what was inside before we got to it.

"You children put your hooks in the water right over there," Mama gestured to an outreach of earth nearby. She already was making her way near this place, with her cane fishing pole and can of earthworms. "Bring along that day quilt to sit on," she called back over her shoulder.

Litter from other fishermen, who had come before us to try their luck, was scattered in the clearing. I kicked an empty cricket box. Donald and I put our baited hooks into the murky water and sat down on the quilt with Mama, watching our red and white corks bob forward and back on tiny waves cast by a boat from out in the bayou's depths.

"Oh, darn!" said Mama, pulling up her hook, which was stripped bare by a robber fish. From somewhere out in the water, beyond the clumps of dead trees

and water lillies and vines, came the sputtering roar of a motorboat.

Time passed in a vacuum. Every once in awhile faint sounds of voices came to our ears. We began to fidget — Donald's cork bobbed under and when little-boy eager, he pulled the line up, a measurable portion of his bait worm was missing. Out of growing boredom I pulled my line. No worm at all, and I hadn't noticed a single bobble of my cork.

Mama pulled up a bluegill, its blackish-blue tail flapping back and forth. The fish landed on the bank, stirring up dust before Mama could take it off the hook and put it in the bucket of water she had optimistically filled before sitting down to her fishing. Donald, jumping around, rebaited Mama's hook.

Really interested in fish now, Mama went back to her place on the bank. We were the only people in the little peninsula. Donald and I forsook our poles and wandered down to the tip of the land, where it was shrouded by cypress and oak trees.

An old fishing boat was tied up in the shallows. "Let's get in the boat," I said. "Let's pretend we're out on the lake, catching lots of fish with Mr. Brooks, Daddy, and Franklin." Donald got in, too, and as he did the boat shifted.

"Oh!" I exclaimed. "What if this boat comes loose and we get out in the water where nobody can reach us. There're not any oars in here." And I looked down; pushing up from the bottom, were miniature geysers of swamp water.

Rocking the boat with our movements, Donald and I scrambled to the front. Donald looked down before he prepared to jump onto shore again. He stopped suddenly, and I lurched into him. "A snake! There's a snake down there," he said, pointing into the water on the right side and slightly under the boat.

Coiled there, in the shallow water, was a large copperhead. Evil and danger emanated from it, covered by the thin depth of water, dappled by shadows from the trees' leaves. My chest constricted as I saw the snake. How were we going to get out of the rowboat past the snake? We could hope it would move of its own accord.

We wavered there for a few minutes, but it seemed like an hour. I tried shaking the boat, hoping the movement would dislodge the copperhead from its watery lair. It did; when Donald and I worked up the courage to look again, it was gone. We jumped out of the boat, feet landing in the water's edge.

"Mama! Mama!"

"What is it? What's happened?" she said, voice apprehensive.

We told her about the snake, building the experience into greater dramatic proportions, I am sure, than it deserved. However we stuck close to the truck and to Mama from then on. I pretended to drive the pickup, looking longingly towards the picnic box under the shade tree.

We were not to eat, however, until an hour later, when the boat pulled into shore and the men got out. They didn't have any fish to show for their more sporting style. "I lost my line on a snag," Franklin complained, while Daddy had caught some little ones, and Mr. Brooks, a florid, large, good-looking man, had let a big one get away while shooting at a snake.

After lunch we sat "around" awhile, cooling off and letting the sandwiches and Kool-Aid settle in our bellies. The mosquitoes, as early in the afternoon it still was, were taking advantage of our lack of energy.

Donald and I had told everyone of our duel with the copperhead. But after that trip to Sharkey Bayou, I had no desire to return to bayou fishing. And I didn't, for years. In fact, I was 22 years old before I went again, and it was summertime instead of late spring.

This time I went on the bayou in the boat. The trouble was, so did four other people. Our party was led by oldest brother Franklin and included my sister, Judy; a friend, Mike Sessums; and my youngest brother, Danny, then twelve.

We approached the Sharkey Bayou from a different route, from the Teoc community. Franklin's white BelAir was low to the ground and it was a hot, dry evening, except for the humidity. Daylight was beginning to wane as we drove through the pasture, bump! bump! bump! to gain access to the bayou.

Franklin backed the car and

aluminum fishing boat toward the low waters of the bayou. Dusk was settling over the black water and woods grabbing up shadows from the trees and stumps in the water, where everything looked like alligators and knots of black snakes.

Noisy buzzing of mosquitoes weighed heavy in the summer air.

Since I was the heaviest, once we got the boat struggling on its way in the clogged bayou water, I got in the middle; Franklin shifted up front to pull us off any stumps we might run upon; Judy sat with me and Danny sat at our feet in the floor. Mike manned the trolling motor.

From his own countless trips through the shallower, murkier waters rife with underwater stumps and suggestions of lurking black fanged snakes weighing at least a ton, Franklin had marked the trail towards open, deeper waters. The dark, silty-looking water seemed intent on sucking us under; the upper parts of the boat sides were no more than four inches from the dark bayou.

With Mike trolling, our heavily-laden boat moved sluggishly through the invisibly-marked trail. We held our breaths. Our hands and arms were kept close to our bodies. We'd heard tales of alligators in the backwaters of Sharkey Bayou.

Temporarily we breathed sighs of relief when suddenly the darkness opened up, and we came to a clearing with deep, smooth water. A rustic duck blind was to our right, with buckets of oil rags supposed to help fight the mosquitoes away.

Franklin insisted there were bass in the Bayou if one came at the right time of day, had good bait, knew how and when to cast, and only if everything was kept absolutely quiet. There was scarcely elbow room for casting. First Mike, then Franklin, then Mike cast their flies.

Silvery ripples appeared in the deep, still waters of the Bayou, where the bass leaped up from time to time. Every once in awhile, it sounded as though a mule had hit the water.

Danny's eyes would get big when this noise came. "Gosh, what a big fish! If only I was over there and if I had a rod and reel," he would say.

We got our turns to cast, as the creeping dusk made more progress.

My turn came. Whap! But something didn't strike my bait — I struck a low-sawed, large cypress stump. Again I cast, near the stump, not on it. A strike! But like old days, I jerked the line too quickly and too hard. The mouth of the fish came up with the lure for a flash above the surface of the water, then was gone.

"Boy, that had to be the biggest fish I ever saw," I said. "It had to be at least a seven-pound bass. I couldn't even have pulled it out of the water," I consoled myself.

Mike snorted in unison with my oldest brother. "Probably a gar," Franklin said. "The Bayou is full of 'em."

"What's a gar?" I said.

"A gar is a long, heavy fish with skin instead of real scales. It isn't fit to eat. Not fit for anything. It's an ugly fish," Mike said.

Later Mike hooked one, so I got to see a gar firsthand in the dusk. It had gotten darker and a little cooler but the mosquitoes were not to be fooled. I slapped at the annoyances on my wrists.

Mike was right, the gar was ugly. It was the longest fish I'd ever seen in fresh water, if a bayou could be termed fresh water, and looked like a cross between a snake and a mackerel. I shuddered, not only with the cold, as Mike threw the thing against the cypress stump.

The daylight barely with us, Mike and Franklin put the rest of the boatload out at the duck blind, as they checked their trot lines. Like chastised children, Judy, Danny, and I were left in the rickety duck blind, vainly trying to fight off the mosquitoes and wishing we'd never come back to Sharkey Bayou. The "skeeters" were after us in such numbers, had they not been so quick we could have killed a thousand with each slap.

Finally they came for us, Mike holding the flashlight as we gingerly stepped into the boat. As we began to find our way out of the clearing, Mike and Franklin had a heated discussion as to where the exit marker was. We got on our way — with our first collision with an underwater stump.

'continued on page 25

David Cohn, a twentieth century Greenville author, once recorded that "the people of the Delta fear God and the Mississippi river." However, the residents of Greenville in the 1870s would have added fire and yellow fever to the list that the writer proposed. The river city, which suffered tremendous losses in flames in 1874 and 1875, faced its greatest disaster



photos by Bob Lord
The old Opera House on Main Street (now non-existent) was the site of a memorial service for the dead.

of the decade in the yellow fever epidemic that gripped the city in 1878.

From late summer until the fever broke after a heavy frost in November, nearly three hundred of the city's 1,000 residents would die. Included in the list of fatalities were the mayor, all but one city councilman, the undertaker and several physicians. Unlike the fires of the previous years, no one could stop the spread of the disease.

How the fever reached Greenville was the subject of debate for many of the city's residents. The many accounts presented various and sundry versions. Today, we know that the *aedes aegypti*, a mosquito, carries the disease from person to person by its bite. If a mosquito bites a person who has yellow fever during the first three days of the illness, the insect can transmit the infectious virus for as long as it lives.

A contemporary of the '78 malady later reflected on the mosquito's covert role in the disaster. "Many people burned perfectly good mattresses, carpets, and draperies that had been left in their closed homes, while they were refugees away from the town. At the same time, no one for an instant felt uneasiness at being bitten by a mosquito."

For example, having escaped the effects of the dreaded disease out on Swiftwater Plantation, Sam Brown returned to his town house in November to fumigate the structure, where the caretaker had died. After his labors, Brown then brought his wife and three daughters back to the supposedly safe home. Tragically, however, the Brown women caught the fever and died. According to the contemporary account, most people thought the carpet to be the cause of the deaths since everything else had been burned. In reality, an infected mosquito had survived the cleansing and the light frosts to transmit the fever.

The first reported victim in Greenville was a four-year-old

daughter of the Mobray family, who died on August 23. Another young resident of the city, Sue Pelham Trigg, later recorded what followed. "While the mother grieved, the doctors of the town had met in grave consultation, for near the end there had appeared suspicious symptoms that caused these wise men much anxiety and fear lest they be dealing for the first



Susie Pelham Trigg recorded the course of the fever.

time with yellow fever." The writer added, "These Physicians, Doctors Walker, Dunn, Bell, Montgomery, and Toombs, had never seen a case of this dread disease, which since June had been raging in New Orleans."

However, the disease did not stop after claiming just one victim. Miss continued on page 25

by Bob Lord

FEVER!

EDITOR'S NOTE: It has been thirty-four years since World War II ended in Europe on May 8, 1945. Today's generation of young people has few emotional ties to World War II, and this is unfortunate. Such an episode in man's history should not be allowed to fade from memory. The following recollection reveals the deep emotion of one Deltan's reaction to the end of this shattering event and is presented here so that our readers, young and old, can share this experience of the past.

Victory

by Hugh C. Smith

Am located in the village of St. Germain-en-Laye. This is a not-too-small but very old suburb of Paris. It has a gorgeous terrace atop a high bluff overlooking the Seine River and the City of Paris. The panorama is magnificent! Here a lot of history has been made. "Herewith was born Louis XIV," and the people never let you forget it. Here died and is buried James II, exiled King of England, victim of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. Here is the Forest of St. Germain-en-Laye, which for years echoed with the gay noise of the royal chase and the French equivalents of "Tally-Ho." From here most of Paris can be seen. This was an early favorite country and hunting resort of the French kings, until the completion of the magnificent Versailles. Here is La Montagne de Bel Air — extremely well-named.

I will try to give you some idea of the feelings and happenings that prevailed a day or so prior to VE Day, as well as what went on in Paris on VE Night.

The surrender of the German armies in southern Germany and northern Italy came suddenly and surprised, I think, even many of the allegedly well-informed. The fall of these armies brought down also the myth of the redoubt, which many of us feared would be an all-too-bloody reality.

Then came Monday morning. Some of us were told about the operations order — that all troops were to assume defensive positions and to cease aggressive maneuvers. That was the big tip-off. The word spread like fire over dry grass. The French papers grabbed the premature AF news and the German radio broadcast, and came out with "Capitulation sans Condition" headlines. The Armed Forces network quoted SHAEF as saying that they had not authorized any such announcement, but they made no denials. That was enough for the French. The publicity, of course, spoiled the well-ordered plans of the "Big Wigs" to announce the news in their own way at their own time. BBC said that the Prime Minister would broadcast an announcement of VE Day "within the next day or two." Finally, Tuesday at 1 o'clock AM it gave up and said that the simultaneous announcement of the German surrender would be made at 3 PM Tuesday, our time. Meanwhile, that afternoon we were informed that a surrender had been arranged and that hostilities would cease at one minute after midnight, Wednesday morning. We all made plans to go to Paris.

As we drew near Paris we could see that this was to be quite a festive occasion. We asked a gendarme, innocently enough, what the occasion was. He replied, "Perhaps there is peace; we do not know for sure." We were running on double daylight savings time and as twilight drew near, about 9:45 PM, a huge roar went up from the assembling throng as a flare, arching high, fell squarely atop the Arc de Triomphe, which immediately burst into full

Memories of the Day

floodlight. This was only the second time the Arc had been lighted since France fell to German forces in 1940. The first time had been when Paris was liberated.

The crowd still needed something to touch it off. Everyone kept asking "Is it official yet?" Response was "No, there are no sirens, but it is certain." As the Arc lit up children formed small circles on the sidewalks and did country dances. Older people looked at each other, smiled, nodded, and seemed just a little bit stunned. Everyone wanted to celebrate, to throw off the somber influence of a victory which brings as many reminders of sorrow as it does promises of joy. Finally, a bunch of GI's started up the Champs Elysee from Place de la Concorde, arms locked, and strung their line across the street. Crowds were happy but still restrained. Their mood was light but not boisterous.

Wednesday there was no work at all. The "Stars and Stripes" carried a 3-inch headline "Victory" but had to quote the German radio as its authority! We all knew and waited for the afternoon hour with impatience and tension. People were more thoughtful than expressive. After all, it was to be rather an anti-climax for many of us. Others just couldn't believe it was over. London was the source of the broadcast. There were the chimes of "Big Ben" and the voice of President Truman telling us what we had known for hours. Our thoughts were interrupted by piercing shrieks of glad sirens in Paris, sounding a last, extra-long "all clear." As the wailing echoes rolled down the valley of the Seine, there arose the full-throated chant of the bells of the churches of France. People were crying. I heard one person say "One year ago today my son was killed." Another said "La guerre est fini."

Naturally, we all headed for Paris again. The Champs was full of milling, eager people. There was more of a festive spirit. Travel on the Metro (French subway) was impossible. We went to the Gardens

of the Tuilleries and watched the American pilots go crazy over town. They "buzzed" everything in Paris, and in all kinds of ships from little fighters to big, lumbering C-47s and powerful B-17s. Fervor from the crowds rose and fell like swells in the ocean. Down the Champs came 30 people in one Jeep!

The Place de la Concorde was the most beautiful square. It was ablaze with lights. It was simply breathtaking in its magnificence. This was the first time in 5 years the fountains were flowing and were all alight. The Ministry of Marien with its twin buildings, between which Rue Royale runs to the Madeleine, is much more impressive under the floodlights. As you look up the Champs Elysee you see the Arc de Triomphe, standing atop a rising knoll and against which a sea of people seem to roll like breakers against a rocky shore. You shut your eyes and try to photograph the scene in your memory. To the right you see the Church of the Madeleine, like a flood-lit Parthenon. To the left, across the Seine, are the high columns of the facade of the Chamber of Deputies. Down the Champs to the Place de la Concorde is a breath-taking sight of the lighted golden dome of the Pantheon from Place Clemenceau. Each sight seemed more magnificent than the last. Down Rue Royale to Madeleine, we walked through a tightly packed crowd along Rue de la Madeleine to Place de L'Opera, around onto Rue de la Paix to Place Vendome. From here we made our way to Rue de Rivalie along the arcades and Gardens of the Tuilleries, around the Louvre, across part of the Seine, past the old prison, onto the Place in front of the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

Notre Dame, Our Lady of Paris, which had stood there and cast her spell over this nation for hundreds of years, which stands on a spot with known history extending back to a few hundred years before Christ, has seen so many vicissitudes, watched so long, seen

so many generations. She stood there calmly, though wounded, magnificent and glorious. Her features darkened with the accumulated strains of the ages were rather marble-like in the brilliance of the lights. The Tricolor fluttered in a warm, soft breeze atop one of her towers. Her spell was not lost. Several hundred people stood in the square, stood in awe, hushed. All along the rail at about five-yard intervals soldiers, some in combat field uniforms, stood looking alternately at the Cathedral itself and then at its ghostly reflection rippling in the night-darkened Seine. You walk quietly as if among worshippers. Sobs were audible.

Next day we had forty-eight hours off. A real holiday spirit prevailed. There were formal parades, the laying of wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the constant talk of when we are to go home.

This may all seem to be an amalgamation of words, but I wanted so badly to get some of it down, for I know that time will wear some of it off of my memory. I know words can't do justice to occasions such as this, but from this account you might, with imagination, form a small picture of what happened in Paris on VE Day and Night.

Hugh Smith, the author of this article, serves as the Financial Secretary for Delta State University. He and his family reside in Cleveland, Mississippi.

Y "The War" Ended

an interview with ELLEN DOUGLAS

The following interview is an excerpt from *Rebecca Hood-Adam's thesis Women Writers, Southern Sisters: Conversations with Ellen Douglas, Eleanor Glaze, and Margaret Walker Alexander*. The study is part of Ms. Hood-Adams' preparation for a Master's degree in English from Delta State University.

Ellen Douglas, also known as Mrs. Josephine Ayres Haxton, is the wife of Kenneth Haxton, Jr., of Greenville. Her first novel, *A Family's Affairs*, was published in 1962 and was awarded a Houghton Mifflin Fellowship. Miss Douglas' short story "On the Lake", later to become part of a novella included in her second book, *Black Cloud, White Cloud*, was first published in the *New Yorker* and was included in the *O. Henry* collection for 1963. Her second novel, *Where the Dreams Cross*, was published in 1968. *Apostles of Light*, published in 1973, was nominated for the National Book Award.

Miss Douglas presently divides her time between Greenville and Monroe, Louisiana, where she is writer-in-residence at Northeast Louisiana University. In 1976 she received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to complete an as yet untitled novel, expected to be published sometime next year. Her work, which has received wide critical praise, focuses on family life in small Southern towns, but her message is universal. In this interview, reproduced here exactly as it occurred, she examines her role as a Southern woman writer.

The following interview with Ellen Douglas was conducted in her Greenville, Mississippi, home on November 1, 1978.

HOOD-ADAMS: As I mentioned during our recent phone conversation, Walker Percy said at last spring's Southern Literary Festival that he thought the best fiction in the next 25 years would be produced by women, in particular Southern women. Could you respond to Mr. Percy's statement? What shared linking bonds, if any, exist between Southern women writers? And if we are living in an era of feminist literature, does the Southern woman writer have a special place in that genre?

DOUGLAS: I think of myself really as being in Walker Percy's generation. I'm not all that much younger. I don't think of myself as a writer of the next 25 years, but of the next 10 or 12, if I'm lucky. I think the function of the novelist in general over the past two or three hundred years has been to criticize society. And while they've mostly come from the bourgeois and upper bourgeois, that's what they've been criticizing — bourgeois society. And so they've been outsiders. Of course, a woman is an outsider in a way that a man is not. If she is a critic of the society she lives in, she's not only outside of society in terms of its general values, but particularly in terms of its attitudes toward women. I don't know whether I agree with Walker or not. I don't think anyone can say with any degree of certainty at all where the next writers are coming from. But I would in a way have a corollary feeling of my own which is that I've often thought over the last few years that the writers of the next 25 years will probably be Black, and that would be for the same reasons, I suppose, that Walker would say they would be female. That is, they are not only outsiders in some ways





photo by Noel Workman

that white men have been in the past, but also doubly so in the way that women are.

*HOOD-ADAMS: Tillie Olsen in her book *Silences* looks at the silences in the careers of many writers, most especially women. She credits some of these silences, this throttling of the creative process, as having been caused by the kinds of singular demands placed upon women in terms of child care and providing for the needs of her home and family. These needs can be in direct conflict with the need for solitude and unbroken stretches of time in which to create. Little pockets of time are not sufficient. If the publishing and the critical world are controlled by men, this creates another wall of silence where, as you have said, women are outsiders. As a woman writer, did you feel certain constraints? I noticed in your *New Republic* article on provincialism in literature that you said you had yearned to do some of the things that only boys were allowed to do.*

DOUGLAS: I would certainly say that the period between when I was married and when my first child went to nursery school, I was constrained not to write by the presence of tiny little pin-headed children in the house who kept me from concentrating. My going back to work was the direct result of the acquisition of an unbroken silent period of time in which to think in the morning when the children were out of the house. I think that for my generation, and this may certainly not be so true now as it was for my generation, that it would be true of a middle classed young woman that ambition in general would not have been particularly useful to her, other than the ambition to marry well. And that achievement in the terms that a man thinks of achievement would not have been nearly so important to her as, again, marriage. That would keep her from thinking about a career, not just in the arts, but any kind of a career with the kind of urgency and seriousness that a man necessarily thinks about a career. It would just never occur to him not to think: "Well, I must have some sort of a career; I must be a professional man or a business man; I must make a

living and I must achieve something in the world." And I don't think that kind of urgent need was true for women. Therefore, particularly if you really wanted to have children and wanted to marry, you were much less likely to start any kind of serious work, artistic or otherwise. I was an achiever. I had that absolutely overwhelming desire to achieve. But I think it ran contrary to the mores of the society I grew up in. I think it's rather strange that I had that desire to achieve. And again, this is generational, and probably is not nearly so true now and maybe not even true at all. But I think that women of my generation and social place were taught to please. They got a double message. All the time their mothers and fathers were saying we're not teaching you to please, we're teaching you to be bright, courageous, productive people — at the same time they were giving you another message, which was that you must please. And it really gets in the way of any kind of work to feel that the most important thing in the world is to please somebody, unless you're in public relations. So I think this was another thing that was a terrible handicap to women, not just in the arts, but in any career.

HOOD-ADAMS: I know many of our mothers' favorite phrase was "make nice, make nice girls." I have asked Jesse Hill Ford if there were stories he did not write or maybe did not publish because his mother was still alive, and he said there were a few, perhaps. When you talk about the desire to please, and this is a terrible conflict for many writers in their work, how do you overcome this problem? The very things that you feel most intensely come from those people and events closest to you. You don't want to hurt those people, yet that's the fodder for your writing. How do you weigh that in the balance?

DOUGLAS: It seems to me that the process of objectifying and removing yourself from what you're doing, which is essential to an artist if he's going to do anything good, works to give a view of your work as if it were separate from you. It is separate, you know, once you've finished it. And if you've been objective and removed yourself,

then they have to view it as a creation and not an autobiography.

HOOD-ADAMS: Some parents would like you to create only something that is clean and uplifting and moral.

DOUGLAS: Oh yeah, that's rough, that's rough. But if you make a little money, well, the more money you make, the less worried they are about what you write.

HOOD-ADAMS: That's probably true.

DOUGLAS: I have never made enough money to get really above it all.

HOOD-ADAMS: When you talk about objectifying, then you would not see yourself identified in any way with the contemporary school of confessional writers. I'm thinking particularly of some women poets such as Plath and Sexton. Do you think their work is weakened by this confessionalism?

DOUGLAS: No. Everybody has his own way of going at things. I'm just speaking of myself and the way I have worked. Maybe my intimates and relatives haven't disapproved of me because I'm not particularly a confessional writer. I'm interested in stories, what happens to characters. They are mainly all made-up characters. By the time I've finished with making someone up — I may have started out with one person's hair and another person's nose — but it becomes a made-up character.

HOOD-ADAMS: It seems to me that the characters that are best drawn have an independent life of their own. You don't limit yourself to just reporting what you know about the person you may have started with.

DOUGLAS: Yes, Yes, that's true.

HOOD-ADAMS: Is any of your work autobiographical? Mr. Joe Stockwell (a critic of Ellen Douglas' work) feels that you are Anna.

DOUGLAS: That's such a difficult question. You know, there's no place to draw your work from except from yourself. Everybody writes out of his own experience. What else have you got? But again, by the time that I've finished, I feel that the character, whether it's Anna or somebody else, is fictional. Although, for example, I was in a boating accident that roughly corresponds to one of the stories in

Black Cloud, White Cloud. But it was so transformed for the purposes that I used it, you can't ever say it's the same thing.

HOOD-ADAMS: Through different stories, we see Anna develop from a little girl that peeks in a hand mirror in the back seat of a car . . .

DOUGLAS: In a way I suppose you could say that a writer has a voice. To some degree, especially in my earlier books, that voice, that voice of the writer, comes through Anna. That's true to some extent in the first two books, but not in the last two.

HOOD-ADAMS: Anna is an achiever.

DOUGLAS: Yes.

HOOD-ADAMS: Despite what society may expect her to do . . .

DOUGLAS: She's going to Africa to be a missionary with Tarzan.

HOOD-ADAMS: I love those fanciful scenes. They reminded me of all those Saturday afternoons in the picture shows. What influenced you — your parents, someone in the community, other writers? What fortified in you this need to achieve?

DOUGLAS: Well, I come of old Presbyterian stock. Presbyterians tend to be achievers. I think even the girls tend to be achievers. I was encouraged, required to do well. If you didn't do well, you were in trouble. I don't know if you ever know why fame and glory seem important to you and then not so important to somebody else. But I suppose I always had that sort of vanity.

HOOD-ADAMS: As a young girl did you ever want other things — to be a ballerina, a nurse, or was this something that you always wanted?

DOUGLAS: No, I really always was interested in writing. My Grandmother wrote children's stories. They weren't published, but we thought they were grand. And it gave me the sense that this was a possible thing to do. That may have been one thing that made me say, well, I can write stories. But I was a compulsive reader. I come of a family of readers. My Mother read aloud to us constantly. But then, she read aloud to all of us and there were four of us, and I'm the only

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by Rebecca Hood-Adams

Summer is the season when most Deltans don't have to travel very far to enjoy a meal fit for the king of cuisine. A quick trip to the backyard garden yields a menu that sets Southern taste buds afire: sliced tomatoes, fried okra, yellow squash seasoned with onion and bacon drippings, black-eyed peas with hamhock, cracklin' cornbread with a puddle of butter dripping over the edge, and a cold glass of buttermilk to wash it all down. To quote my Father's highest culinary praise as he breakfasted in New Orleans on flaming bananas, "And to think some poor souls in this world are eating soggy cornflakes!"

But between now and the time that first tomato ripens on the vine, here are some dining suggestions from our continuing list of the best off-the-beaten-path restaurants in our area.

Boyle, just south of Cleveland off Highway 61, is without question the "in" place to be for fine food and congenial atmosphere. Bogart's on the Boulevard in Boyle is open Tuesdays through Saturdays at 5 p.m. Steaks cooked over an open pit charcoal grill and carved to your specifications are the speciality of the house. Oysters and shrimp top off the menu. Beer is served and you may "brown bag it" if you hanker for a little stronger toddy for the body. The decor features hanging plants, antique wooden tables, and a marble bar with a brass footrail. Either Fish Mickey or Boogaloo, formerly with Al Hirt and Sammy Davis, Jr., keep the customers entertained at the upright standing grand piano. There's no cover charge, but there are also no prices on the menu. Owner Les Pearman says the average tab runs \$12 to \$13 per person. Bogart's is just the place for that special night out, but don't fail to make a reservation. Crowds of happy customers have made phoning ahead (846-7355 or 846-7344) an absolute necessity.

Just across the Boulevard from Bogart's is another fine new restaurant with a special atmosphere. The Sweet Olive is open Monday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The menu, which changes every day, is

geared toward the ladies' tastes. Elegant luncheons are served amidst chic antiques. Prices range from \$3.75 to \$4.50. The service is excellent, the small tea room restful, and the entire dining experience permeated with luxury. Be certain to call (846-1100) for a reservation. And while you're there, take time to browse through the four adjacent speciality shops and art gallery.

For a change of pace, try Sherman's Grocery and Delicatessen at 1400 South Main Street in Greenville. For over 30 years Deltans have enjoyed Sherman's "po-boy" sandwiches, hot tamales, and gumbo, served either in house or on a take-out basis. And don't miss their homemade pies. Open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sherman's will cater parties.

When you're in Indianola during the noon hour, stop by the Antique Mall, located five miles north of Indianola on Boyer Road. It's open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., but call (887-2522) ahead for reservations. Gourmet food is served in the antique shop, and evening parties for 16 or more may be arranged by appointment.

For generous helpings of Chinese food, try Jack's Pagoda on Third Street in Leland. They're open Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m.

While you're in Leland, try Lillo's, just off Highway 82. Closed on Mondays, Lillo's offers Italian specialities and steaks. Hours are from 4:30 p.m. until 11 p.m., and liquor is served.

In Greenwood the place to stop for seafood, steak, and pompano is Lusco's at 722 Carrollton Avenue. It's open Tuesday through Sunday from 5 p.m. until 10:30 p.m.

From your own backyard to just down the road apiece, the Delta is blessed with an abundance of that fine cooking that has made Southern dining synonymous with satisfied appetites. Between now and our Fall issue we'll be on the road looking for new taste treats, and weeding the backyard garden to burn off a few of those extra calories this job entails. Ah, the trials and tribulations of a working girl!

Rebecca Hood-Adams is currently working on her master's degree in English at Delta State University. She graduated from Memphis State University with a B.A. in journalism and is now employed as a head resident on the Delta State campus while she is completing her degree.

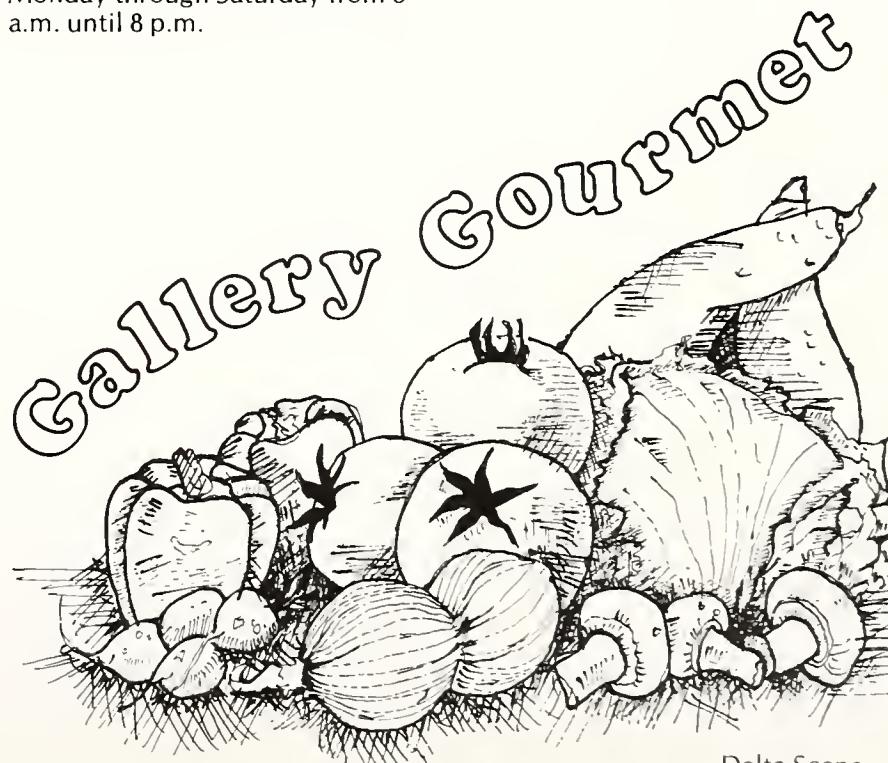


Illustration by Susie T. Ranager

SAILING COMES TO THE



DELTA

by Mary Rose DuPont Booth

Cars and pick-ups pulling motor boats heading toward one of the Delta's several lakes are a common enough sight on any weekend afternoon in the summer. But wait! There goes a boat without a motor.

If, out of curiosity, you were to follow it, you might wind up on the shores of Lake Washington. There, perhaps to your surprise, you'd observe not one but many motorless boats. Sailing, you see, has come to the Delta.

Lake Washington, a twenty-minute ride south from Greenville on Route 1, is the meeting place for a small but growing number of Delta sailors. The two men who were instrumental in introducing sailing to the area were raised on the lake's shores.

B. J. Tonnar and his life-long friend, Ken Stokes, are the owners of Glen Allan Sailboat Sales, a one-year-old business located in Glen Allan.

B. J., who sports salt-and-pepper grey hair and a ready grin, says he first got interested in sailing about 30 years ago.

"I lived on Long Island in New York from 1950-1952, while attending an automotive design school," he says. "Sailing is very popular in the Northeast, and it wasn't long before I tried it. On my first time out, I decided I had to have my own boat, and I soon acquired a 23 ft. Pennant."

The Korean War came between B. J. and his boat, however. After a tour in the Army, B. J. came home to plant cotton and soybeans on family land.

"Back in the pre-fiberglass days, sailing was a rich man's sport because wood boats were so expensive," he says. "When I came home to farm, I felt I couldn't afford a wood sailing boat."

Fiberglass, according to B. J., made sailboats affordable. About four years ago, he purchased a 22 ft. Venture and re-acquired his love for vessels under sail. Propelled by the wind, gliding through the water as gracefully and quietly as a swan, his Venture must have caused quite a stir, at first, among local motorboaters.

"The emphasis in the Delta has always been on power and speed when it comes to water sports," he says. "We hope to change some of that."

B. J.'s buddy, Ken Stokes, was his first convert.

"B. J. took me out on his boat and it wasn't long before I wanted one of my own," says Ken, a quiet yet personable and friendly man. "Actually, I got interested in sailing years ago when I was in the Coast Guard. In the early 50's I was assigned to the Gulf Coast and patrolled the big sailboat races from New Orleans to Fort Walton Beach, the Pan-American Regatta, and smaller races on Lake Pontchartrain."

Before turning their love of sailing into a business, however, Tonnar and Stokes spent a couple of years assessing the leisure market and investigating possible lines of boats. Their research resulted in the opening of Glen Allan Sailboat Sales in May of 1978.

"We realized that we were going to have to teach at least the basics of sailing to our customers who'd

had no previous experience," B. J. says, "so, at first we stocked boats which were very easy to maneuver and which the whole family could enjoy."

The Windrose, available in lengths from 18 to 25 feet, is, according to B. J., "a good cruising boat." Its cabin will sleep four to five adults.

Ken adds, "Now, we offer day-sailing boats, like the Newport Surprise, which do not have cabins but are great for one-day family excursions, as well as for racing. We also have smaller boats, like the Phantom, that are really in the sport sailboat category."

In other words," grins B. J., "we've got something that will fit everybody's needs and pocketbooks. Our boats range in price from \$650 to over \$10,000."

Out of the interest in sailing generated by B. J. and Ken, a club of like-minded enthusiasts was probably inevitable. The Oxbow Sailing Club, organized in 1976, boasts no fancy building or marina, at least not at the moment. What it does have is a loyal group of about 30 sailors and their families, and a boat launch on B. J.'s land on Lake Washington.

Dues are \$25 to join and \$15 a quarter: non-boat memberships are available for \$7.50 a quarter.

Glenn York, a native of Benoit and currently a car salesman in Greenville, bought his first sailboat from Ken and B. J. last year. Glenn says, "Our members are a happy bunch of men and women who came from all walks of life. We have lawyers, farmers, bank tellers, housewives, executives, and doctors."

Glenn explained that the club has monthly meetings to discuss racing and race procedures; to exchange tips on better sailing; and occasionally to view a sailing film. The club hopes that with an increase in membership it will be able to afford the construction of rest room and bathhouse facilities at the launch site.

"Another of the club's aims," Glenn added, "is to promote sailing as a family sport." Saturday night cookouts and Sunday afternoon picnics provide a means for members and their families to get better acquainted.

Glen likes to philosophize about the difference between sailors and motorboaters. "I see it as a difference in attitude toward life as well as a difference in interests," he says. "Some people get more pleasure out of fishing, or water-skiing, or just speeding on water. Others prefer the change sailing affords from the rush and pressures of everyday life."

B. J.'s wife, Renie, adds another modern-day reason for sailing: "We use the wind to get around the lake; therefore, we're not only conserving energy but also saving the lake from pollution."

Renie, an attractive sun-tanned blonde, sailed from Gulfport to Ship Island with B. J., their daughter Jean, and their mascot, Renie's Yorkshire terrier, Spanky.

Thirteen-year-old Jean Tonnar, however, expresses some reservations about sailing. "I'm still a little scared about tipping the boat over," she says.

B. J., Ken, and Glenn maintain, though, that learning to sail safely is easy. Glenn says he learned the basics of sailing his 12 ft. Blue Crab in less than a half hour.

"After that," he says, "experience is the best teacher. You just have to take the boat out and experiment. Sailing every weekend for two or three months," he claims, "will give you enough confidence to enter 'one of our races."

The Oxbow Sailing Club conducts regularly scheduled sailboat races during the spring and the fall on Lake Washington. In addition, it sponsors two regattas — one July 4, the other on Labor Day.

Because of high water and unfavorable weather conditions,

the first spring race this year could not be held until May 20. That day was a sailor's dream — bright sun, blue sky, and a stiff breeze teasing the 13-mile length of Lake Washington into small foam-tipped waves.

The boat launch was a busy place — everyone was anxious to get afloat — yet the atmosphere was relaxed and cordial.

"Here comes Jack," yelled B. J.

Jack McNeil, who jokingly refers to himself as a "delivery boy," is a Greenville obstetrician/gynecologist. He's lived in Greenville three years and sails on Lake Ferguson as well as on Lake Washington.

He has brought two friends down to the lake with him, David and Nancy Keddy. David, also a Greenville physician, and his wife have moved recently to the Delta from Nova Scotia.

"My husband has been sailing all his life," says Nancy Keddy, who also enjoys sailing. "We had to leave our boat in Nova Scotia. It's a 2400-mile trip from there to here. Just too expensive to move our boat. We plan to sell it and buy another boat here." She adds, "I just can't imagine my husband without a sailboat!"

Saundra Mardis and Todd Lane are the proud joint-owners of a 12 ft. Minifish. Saundra is a young, attractive data processor at the First National Bank in Greenville. When asked about her sailing ability, she says, "Well, I haven't tipped over yet!"

Some sailors maintain that you haven't been "baptized" until you've tipped your boat and managed to right it again. This feat, according to sailing manuals, can be easily accomplished in 15 seconds by leaning on, then pulling down on the centerboard, while pushing the underwater deck rim with one foot.

However, John Booth, who spent a chilly hour in the water last March trying to right his 14 ft. Surprise, says he's not particularly anxious to repeat his "born again" experience. "At least, not in March," he says.

John, a manager with Baxter-Travenol Labs in Cleveland, is big on the therapeutic effects of sailing, a feeling shared by other sailors.

On that first race day of the season, excitement mounted at the sound of the horn announcing the pre-race skipper's meeting. At the meeting, the course of the race, proper procedures, and each boat's handicap was announced.

Griff Alford, who carves wood trophies for the club, was timekeeper. He explained that the club uses the U.S. Yacht Racing Union's Portsmouth Yardstick, a rating system that assigns each boat a handicap based on its design. The first boat to cross the finish line, therefore, may not be the winner. After the race is over skippers and crew must wait for the corrected time to be announced to see who's won.

Although it's possible to race a sailboat alone, most of the skippers that day had at least one crew member aboard. Once out on the lake, skippers are advised about how many minutes to starting time by a system of colored flags mounted on the pier. No boat can cross the starting line until the red flag is in position.

What a sight! Eight boats of various classes and designs, sporting mainsails and jibs of traditional white or bright blue, yellow and red, maneuvered in the wind for a favorable position.

B. J. is not racing his Venture that day. Instead, he stands on the pier impartially shouting advice to all sailors within voice range.

Those left on shore are enjoying the day, the race and each other. Children are everywhere, running and enjoying the feel of warm sand between their toes and cooling off with a dip in the lake.

B. J.'s grandmother, 92-year-old Susie B. Law, strolls down to the shore from her house on the hill. Everyone affectionately greets "Mama Sue," as she likes to be called. She, in turn, has a word for all. The grown-ups are especially amused at her keen, earthy wit.

Jackie Milner, wife of Tom Milner, the club's commodore, is telling folks that Tom got his interest in sailing from her. "I'm originally from San Francisco and I grew up sailing on San Francisco Bay. Tom and I met when he was in the service, stationed in California."

Just then, the horn sounds, welcoming the first boat across the

finish line. It sounds seven more times, as each of the remaining seven racers finish.

Pete Waters, a visiting sailboat dealer from New Orleans, is the winner. Billy Cross and Glenn York sail a Catamaran into second place, and Tom Milner and John Booth capture third in a Newport 16.

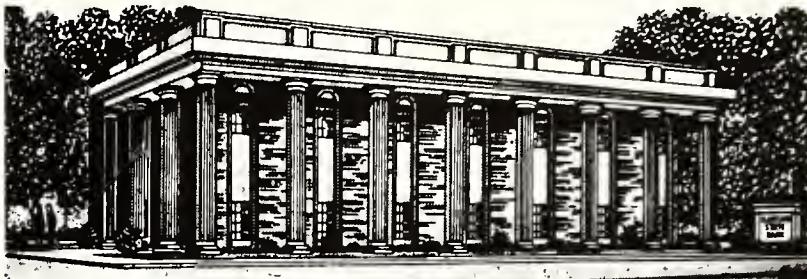
The end of the race does not, however, signal the end of sailing for the day. Barbara Stokes, Ken's wife, says moonlight sailing can be a lot of fun too.

Although Lake Washington seems to afford the best sailing in the Delta, sailing is also possible on Lakes Beulah, Whittington, and Ferguson. So, if you're tired of noise, pollution, and the hectic pace of modern life, put some fun in your life. Try sailing!

Rosie Booth is a free-lance writer and a graduate student majoring in history at Delta State University.

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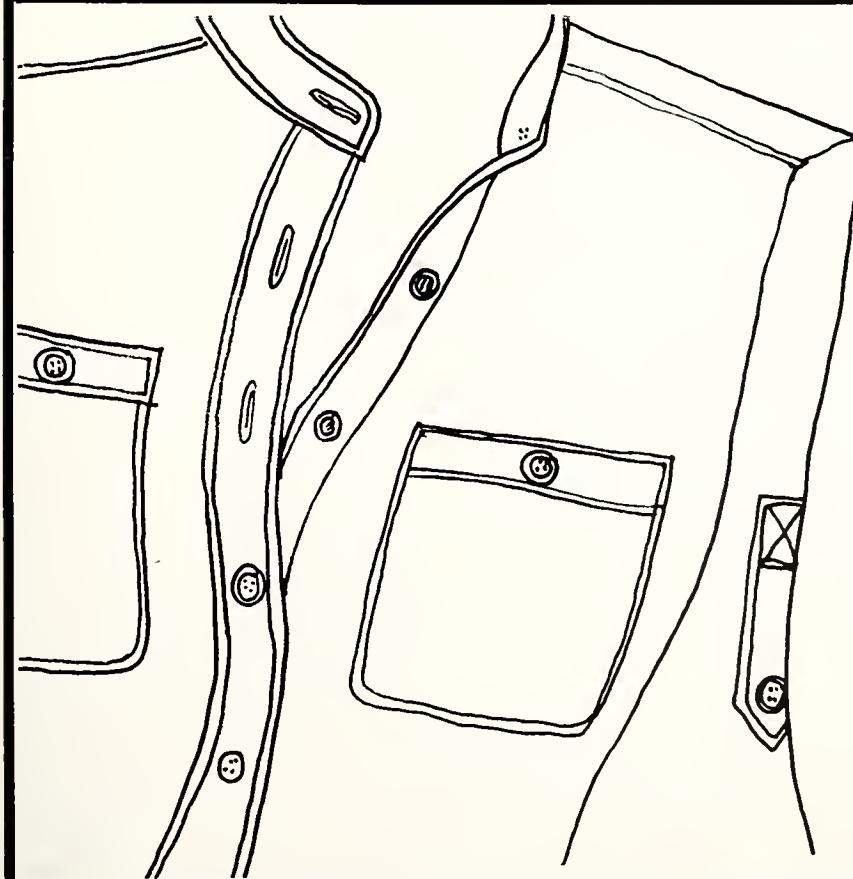
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Return of the Painter continued from page 10

Jake said proudly, "I saw one." For a moment his grandfather looked at him. It seemed an effort to keep his eyes open, but he looked at Jake intently, studying his face.

"You wouldn't fool an old fooler, would you, boy?"

"No, sir."

"Where'd you see it?"

"Up in the National forest. Along an old road."

The old man raised himself slightly, turning on his side. His eyes were smiling.

"We used to haul timber out along that road years ago. You say you saw one?"

Jake nodded.

"A big one?"

"I reckon," Jake said. "And awful quick."

"What color was he?"

Jake paused. He could not describe something he had not actually seen, but only felt.

"I don't know," he said finally, "It was too fast."

"How did you feel when you saw

it?"

Jake smiled. "Pretty scared, Sam, too. All his hair stood up."

"That's it," said his grandfather, nodding.

"I started tingling all over and I was afraid to move for a while."

The old man smiled and said, "That's right. When I was your age, eleven or so, I saw one. Down by the river. I ain't never forgot the feeling."

"It was scary," Jake said.

"Sure, it was scary. I remember. You know, they used to say a painter was really the ghost of an injun come back to his old hunting ground. Lord, Jake, you love a story like that when you're a boy. You can be home all tucked safe in bed and know they're out there somewhere. Like shadows. Only they can't hurt you 'cause you're safe at home. Many a night I'd lie awake listening for one to holler."

"Did you ever hear one?" Jake asked.

"No." His grandfather lay back on the pillow and looked again at the ceiling. "No, I never heard one."

"I'll start listening," Jake said.

The old man nodded.

"I'm awful glad I got to see it," Jake said.

"I am, too," said his grandfather.

Jake moved his feet uneasily.

"Well, I don't want to get you tired," he said. "I'll come back later."

"All right, Thank you, little Jake."

When he left the room, Jake found his father standing outside the door. As he passed his father's hand gripped his shoulder for a moment.

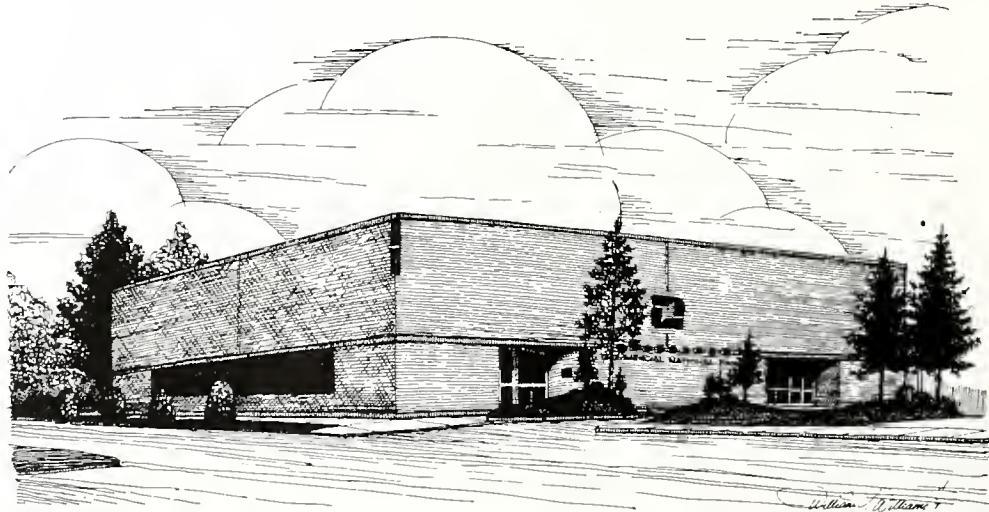
"Pop," Jake heard his father say, "I spoke to Doc Perkins. He says it's better if we get you in right now, tonight."

"I think he's right, George," his grandfather said.

Jake moved away. He did not want to hear. He went into his room and sat on the bed. It was dark, but he did not switch on the light. He sat for a long time, listening to the silence.

Years later, when he was a man, Jake resolved within himself what the return of the painter had meant to his grandfather. All men, both in living and in dying, needed reassurance. For his grandfather the big cats had given assurance of the

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permanent order of things. They were part of an unbroken circle. Men might believe it was broken, but it wasn't. A man returned to the earth and became, like the cats, the deer and all living things, a part of the cycle. Nothing really ended. Sooner or later, it started over.

At times in the quiet of night, with the sounds of the city traffic fading as Jake stood in the front yard of his house, a breeze might stir the shrubbery in a mysterious way, and the old feeling of the boy on the logging road would bring him joyous prickles of anticipation.

James A. Gray of Memphis is a 1955 graduate of Messick High School in Memphis. He has had stories published in the OLD HICKORY REVIEW and GONE SOFT (a Salem State College, Massachusetts publication). Mr. Gray is president of the Mid-South Writers' Association and is currently employed as a salesman.

Bayous Aren't for the Timid continued from page 12

The collision was of no consequence, for we were off the stump quickly, churning, pushing and bobbing our way through the slime, the beam of the flashlight groping its way ahead of the boat.

We heard a noise in the back of the boat, and Danny sat there stiff and trembling. His britches' legs were wet. "What is it, Danny?" He gave a sheepish grin.

Danny had fallen out of the boat when looking hard at a stump to the side. He thought it might be an alligator. His fear brought him out of the water and into the boat again, before anyone realized he'd hit the water.

It was pitch dark before we, boat weaving and jerking as it hit snags and stumps, had halfway made our way through the backwaters. We were all shakey, but our guides were determined they were taking us home. In the dim torchlight we weren't confident. Nothing looked familiar to me; I was certain the boat would sink and in seconds pirhannas would have devoured our flesh.

Judy didn't say much — just

stirred the thick mosquitoes.

"Lord, you'll have to be doing some to get me to come out to Sharkey Bayou ever again — even in broad daylight," I said. "I've turned city slicker."

The shore was ahead. As we proceeded through water so shallow the boat would no longer move forward, I stepped into the water, beating any snakes that might be lurking underneath, to dry land.

"Wow," said my sister. "I thought we'd never get out of there alive. I thought we would drown coming back in the dark, hitting all those hidden stumps."

The boys, being boys, have made many more trips into the dark bowels of Sharkey Bayou. They swear it's an excellent spot for fishing. As for me, however, I'll bait my hook somewhere less adventurous.

Susie James is a 1970 graduate of the Mississippi University for Women and a native of Carroll County, Miss. She is currently employed as a feature writer/photographer for the DELTA DEMOCRAT-TIMES in Greenville.

Fever! continued from page 13

Trigg continued, "The next day the mother and one of the neighbor nurses were stricken, and thus all doubt was removed and the dreaded fact was proclaimed that, yellow fever, in epidemic form was in our midst." Three more deaths were reported in the city before the end of the month, when the epidemic was officially declared.

From New Orleans came one proposed treatment. Among Dr. Joseph Holt's directions were: "Cover the patient lightly — give hot tea and mustard foot bath, and empty the stomach with mustard and salt emetic if a hearty meal has been recently eaten." As for what the patient should have to drink, the New Orleans physician stated, "During the fever, allow orange leaf tea as a drink and barley water as a nourishment. On the third day cool water may be allowed in moderation. No ice or ice water during the first fifty hours." In addition, body baths of vinegar and water or spirits were suggested. "In

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convalescence the proper diet is chicken or beef broth, plain mush, and milk," Dr. Holt concluded.

Located in a largely unsettled region, Greenville could be left by only three methods. Horse drawn wagons and the river were available means of departing from the city when the disease had invaded its limits. The third method was the Greenville, Columbus and Birmingham Railroad which ran through Stoneville. Henry T. Ireys, in a paper that was read before the Washington County Historical Society in May 1915, described the railroad's last run before the quarantine was established. "Under the counsel of the attorneys for the road — Percy and Yerger — the evening train on the 31st of August was to be the last from Greenville. All who desired to leave by that route were invited, free of charge for themselves with their household effects."

Fearing the effects of the "Fever," many of the town's citizens took full advantage of the offer. "The cars were crowded, and the train comprised all the rolling stock; and, with repair tools and a large quantity of coal for blacksmith

purposes, headed for Stoneville," Ireys recorded.

Although the railroad had pulled out of the stricken city, some people felt that it was their obligation to remain in Greenville during the epidemic. "There were a few who felt it their duty to stay, such as the men who managed the wharf boat, the doctors, the preachers, the editor, two young bankers, and the Mayor of the town," Miss Trigg wrote. However, the disease did not avoid these officials who remained. City Councilman C.E. Morgan, who had been mayor at the time of the two fires, died on September 7. Reverend D.C. Green fell victim and died eight days later. Councilman T.P. Perry died September 18, followed by mayor A.B. Trigg four days later, town marshall Arthur H. Yerger on the twenty-third, the undertaker the twenty-fifth, and councilman John H. Nelson the twenty-ninth. Only one councilman, Nathan Goldstein, survived.

A contemporary of the malady recorded the charity that the citizens shared. Preserved partially at the Washington County Library in

Greenville, the letter reads, "Then our venerable Judge (Newman J.) Nelson succumbed to the ruthless destroyer. Till death marked him for his own he was constantly using every exertion to mitigate the wide spread suffering. How much his family, his beloved Church and his ardent friends will miss him, we have not words to tell."

According to the ever-growing list of deaths that the *Greenville Times* published, September 18 was definitely a black day for the city, for on that single date twenty-four people died from Yellow Fever.

The large number of deaths in such a brief period of time caused a serious shortage of coffins. This situation was further complicated when undertaker John Manifold and his aids succumbed to the malady and burial committees were formed by the townsmen to dispose of the mounting number of bodies. According to Trigg in her "Recollections of a Little Girl of 1878," "There was not a casket left, so they commandeered lumber and men and made plain, unpainted wooden boxes, which served for rich and poor, white and black alike. No longer could the question

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of family plot in the cemetery be considered. Instead, there was dug grave after grave in long rows, to stand in readiness as the victims fell.

"After the fever was over, several of these open graves, left unused, were mute evidence of the pitiful haste that had been thought necessary to protect the living."

The first resting site for many of the victims of Yellow Fever was the city cemetery on North Poplar across from the court house of the time. A document at the Greenville library described the organization of the area. "The western side (was) allotted to white people & the east or back part for negroes. No one foresaw the growth of the town so when we had a number of Jewish citizens, their religion made it desirable that they have a plot of their own. It was decided that they have the middle section of the block, and that is still a lovely quiet home of the dead. That used by Gentiles was filled in 1878 by Yellow Fever dead. At the last it being impossible to preserve any line between the white & black — but they were buried row after row."

After the epidemic had run its course, some of the victims were moved to a new cemetery on Rattlesnake Bayou. The site, then known as Greenway Cemetery, is presently Greenville Cemetery. This area, which was laid out by Major Richard O'Hea, was three miles from the city in 1878.

In December a large memorial service was held in the old Opera House on Main Street. Miss Trigg described the event. "In the center of the building was a massive catafalque, draped heavily in black, symbolic of those graves which lay row on row in the 'God's acre' of the sorrowing little town . . . All through the service there a quiet weeping, which broke into heartbroken sobs when 'Paradise, O'Paradise' was sung by Mrs. Dr. Walker in her lovely voice so suited to sympathy and comfort."

Bob Lord is a recent graduate from Delta State University where he received a master's degree in history. Bob currently works for the audio-visual department at Delta State and is a resident of Greenville.

Ellen Douglas continued from page 18

one who writes. So I don't know where you exactly trace this desire.

HOOD-ADAMS: Who were your favorite authors?

DOUGLAS: Again, that's generational. When I was a little girl, good gracious, I had *Ivanhoe* read aloud to me and *Deerslayer* and *The Spy* and all those Dickens. As long as we could persuade her to sit and read, we would listen. We read all those classics. *Alice in Wonderland*. Not to mention those philosophic and moral tales that were Presbyterian.

HOOD-ADAMS: I remember seeing once a little book, *Whiter Than Snow, about a virtuous match girl who freezes to death in the snow . . .*

DOUGLAS: Oh yes, Elsie Dinsmore. Mama would never read Elsie Dinsmore. She thought it was terrible.

HOOD-ADAMS: The influence of these classical tales . . . I know you've been called a writer of manners and mores . . .

DOUGLAS: Yes, I suppose that's a fair evaluation. I'm interested in characters in their setting and in the mores of society. I'm not particularly an experimental writer I'm interested in plot and story and character. You know when people write about you, like Stockwell, they say that's the nineteenth century. But the story is considerably older than nineteenth century novels. I think people's lives tend to be stories. It's a curious thing. And the reason we really like stories is because our lives cast themselves in stories. That's simply a known fact.

HOOD-ADAMS: Is that part of the Southern tradition of story telling? I knew a man named Clayton Rand who had a theory about what he called front porch rockerism and the development of the Southern school of literature. You know, everyone down South would sit on the front porch and rock and swap stories and lies. So that you had not only your own stories, but those of your father and your grandfather.

DOUGLAS: I think that living in a stable society in which three or four generations were present and

reacted to each other in a very complex way, and the grandparents did tell about what happened when they were young, was immensely enriching to me. I did grow up in that kind of enormously complex familial situation. Everybody — not everybody, but most every in my family — was exceedingly articulate, and they like to talk. I don't know about front porch rockerism, but that's how we entertained each other. We talked.

HOOD-ADAMS: You have a sharp eye for the details of family life. Some of my favorite passages in Family Affairs involve the wall paper in the dining room and the floor board, where you become so accustomed to the house that you just automatically put your house shoes on. You know the splinters are there. You have a good ear for the kind of dialogue that develops in family conversations. Is the family homestead a symbol for you in most of your work?

DOUGLAS: Oh, I don't know. That house in the first book, *Family Affairs*, was based upon a real house, and was a house that was very vivid in my memory. In the book I'm working on now I'm using a house too. So I suppose that is true, although family homestead may be the wrong word. But when Mr. Stockwell says that I write about people in society, perhaps I write about people in houses.

HOOD-ADAMS: In *Apostles of Light*, these are people who have lost their houses, lost their own place. The house is very important there too.

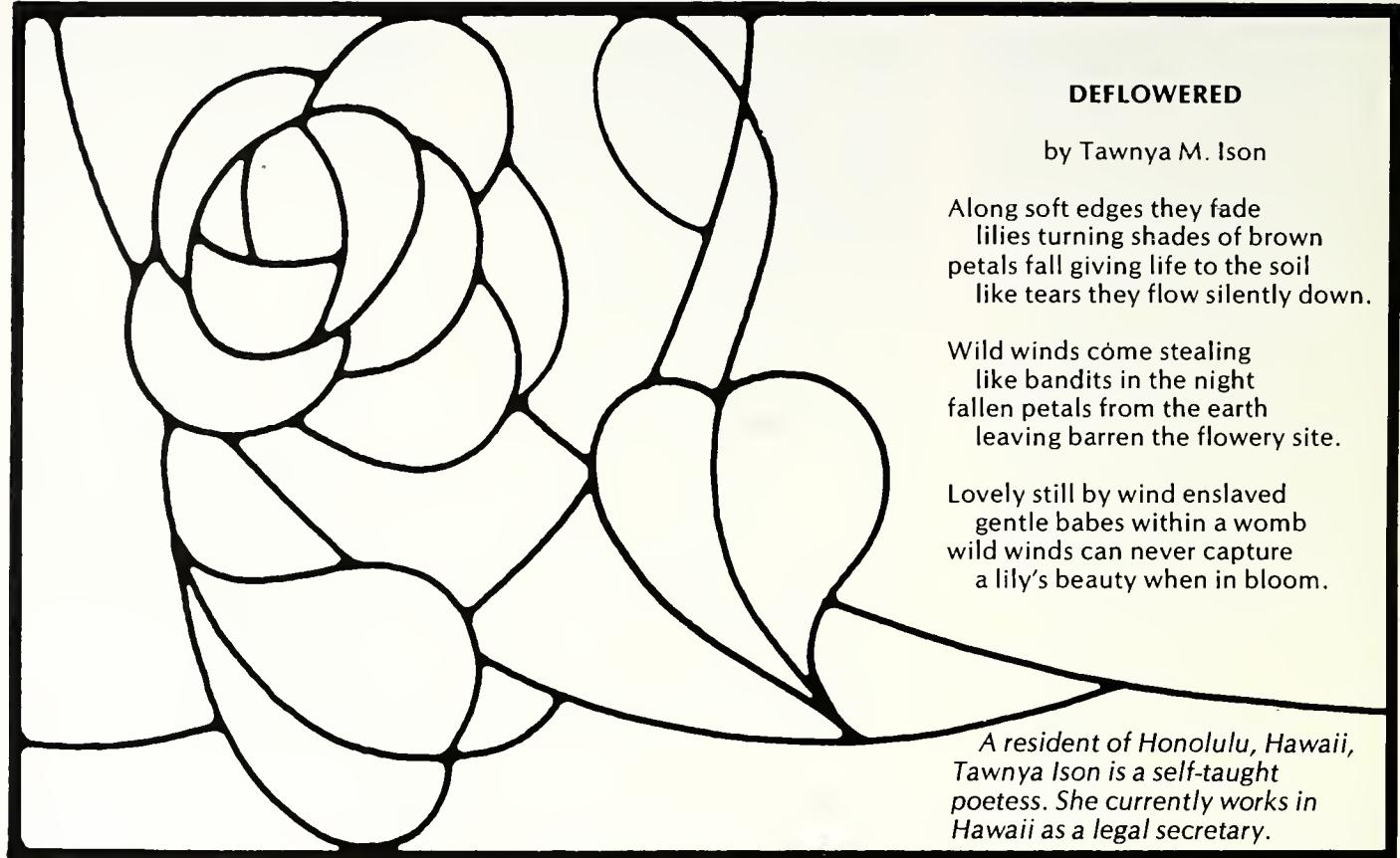
DOUGLAS: Yes, it's true that it is important. I hadn't even thought about how much a house means to me. And, of course, there's that really wild house in *Where the Dreams Cross*.

HOOD-ADAMS: And the Bairds in "The House on the Bluff." I just seemed to see a link between these houses.

DOUGLAS: Yes. And then it's true that everything is familial instead of societal in those stories. So the house would have to be important.

HOOD-ADAMS: You mentioned in *Family Affairs* that people would say certain pieces of furniture came from this old house, as if the

continued on page 30



DEFLOWERED

by Tawnya M. Ison

Along soft edges they fade
lilies turning shades of brown
petals fall giving life to the soil
like tears they flow silently down.

Wild winds come stealing
like bandits in the night
fallen petals from the earth
leaving barren the flowery site.

Lovely still by wind enslaved
gentle babes within a womb
wild winds can never capture
a lily's beauty when in bloom.

A resident of Honolulu, Hawaii,
Tawnya Ison is a self-taught
poetess. She currently works in
Hawaii as a legal secretary.

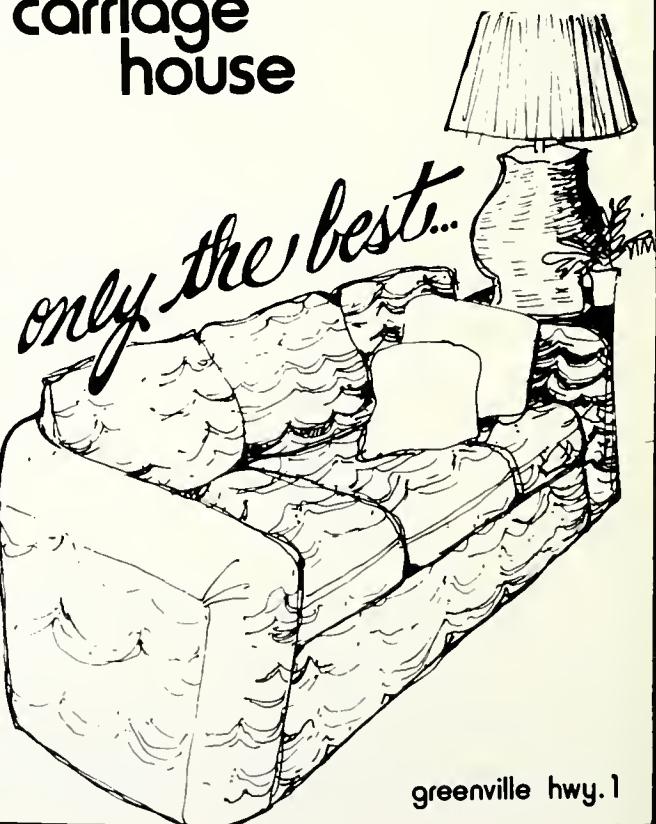
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Ellen Douglas
continued from page 27

furniture were repositories of secrets . . .

DOUGLAS: Of emotions . . .

HOOD-ADAMS: Of history. Your women characters are very strongly drawn. That old myth, or maybe it's not entirely a myth, of the typical Southern woman somehow got translated into the petulant Scarlett O'Hara . . .

DOUGLAS: Oh, yeah, that.

HOOD-ADAMS: I think they forget that she also ran the mill and made a fortune.

DOUGLAS: Yeah.

HOOD-ADAMS: Your women appear to me to be survivors.

DOUGLAS: I suppose that's a fact.

HOOD-ADAMS: They may have to manipulate a little bit like Nat to get what they need, but they are survivors. Are your women typical Southern women or are they just women in the South?

DOUGLAS: When I get ready to write I don't really think about character in those general terms. I think much more particularly in terms of the individual. One of the things that would make me decide that I was going to write this story rather than that story would be because I had known, say a woman or a man whose character interested me, and who could be used to make a general statement about the world I live in. Something about his or her life and character says something very general about the society. I don't really . . . I'm in the South. That's an accident really. It's a very important accident because that is where I know what the trees look like and what the grass looks like

and how the people talk . . . in the South, because that's where I am. But I think of it more in human terms.

HOOD-ADAMS Your stories hinge upon or are seen through the eyes of the women involved — Kate, Charlotte, Nat.

DOUGLAS: I have tended always to think of women as being realists and less likely to delude themselves. It is essential for them not to delude themselves in order to survive. That's a quality that's possibly truer in the South than in other parts of the country because there are so many illusions and delusions here that women have to skirt their way around. Survival is essential in order to deal with the sort of ideas that are being promulgated by the Southern man.

HOOD-ADAMS: Charlotte is very much of a realist in terms of what she wants in a husband.

DOUGLAS: Oh yes, she's much more of a realist, say, than the man she marries.

HOOD-ADAMS: I enjoyed the part where she's outlining what she wants in a suitor.

DOUGLAS: And Nat is much more of a realist than Wilburn is.

HOOD-ADAMS: Were you as cautious, as much of a realist as Charlotte when you married?

DOUGLAS: I've been exceedingly fortunate in that my husband has always been very supportive of my work. That's been very important to my success. He has always encouraged and understood my need to create. But then he is an artist too, and so he understands. It's true that when I got ready to marry I had very specific intentions to marry someone who saw me as a human being first before he saw me

as a female. That had very much to do with the way the South was at the time and the illusions and delusions of the Southern male. That characteristic in my husband has stood us both in good stead.

HOOD-ADAMS: When you say that being in the South was sort of an accident for you, do you view yourself as a regional writer, or is there any such category any more?

DOUGLAS: No. That's always seemed to me a sort of pejorative word. I hope I'm not a regionalist. I hope I'm writing about people that would be accessible to as many people in as many places as possible.

HOOD-ADAMS: You emphasized in the New Republic article the importance of having a sense of place.

DOUGLAS: Yes, I think you have to have a very powerful sense of the reality of the physical world. You have to be somewhere in order to write about it.

HOOD-ADAMS: It bothers me that nowadays you can leave on a vacation and have breakfast at a golden arches, drive 300 miles and have lunch at another McDonald's, drive 300 miles further and have dinner at still another Ronald McDonald's. Where have you been?

DOUGLAS: Yeah, that's true. I try to avoid that. Take your lunch with you.

TO BE CONTINUED

PART TWO of **An Interview with Ellen Douglas** will be published in the fall issue of Delta Scene.

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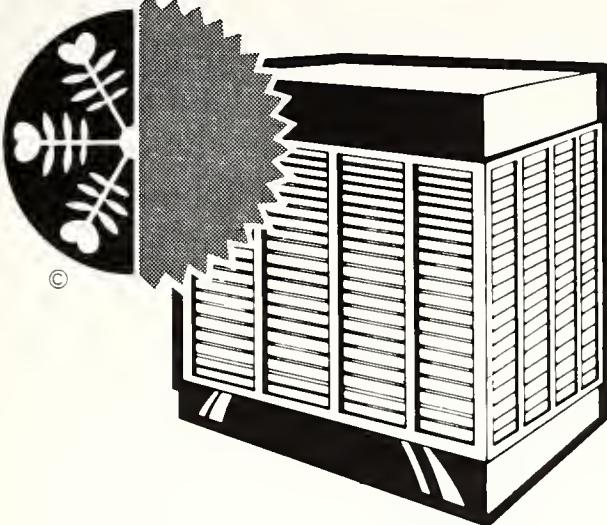
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Rebecca Hood-Adams is currently working on her master's degree in English at Delta State University. She graduated from Memphis State University with a B.A. in journalism and is now employed as a head resident on the Delta State campus while she is completing her degree.



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